NATION

‘Don’t bring down morale of women officers at this time’

≫ Page: 4 ≪

BUSINESS

Markets tumble as India-Pak clash soars

≫ Page: 7 ≪

SPORTS

Unnati, Ayush move into semifinals of Taipei Open

≫ Page: 8 ≪

www.twitter.com/EnglishSalar
www.facebook.com/EnglishSalar
www.instagram.com/dailysalarenglish
youtube.com/@dailysalardigital

SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

Website: salarnews.in | www.magzter.com | 10 MAY 2025 | SATURDAY | BENGALURU | 11 DHU‘L-QI‘DAH, 1446 AH | Vol 4 | Issue No 126 | Pages: 8

BLAME GAME ON AS CONFLICT SPIRALS

India reports 16 deaths, including 2 children

Pak hit 36 sites with 300-400 Turkish drones

MEA says Pak is weaponising civil aviation

Misri says Pak targeted religious sites

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

Pakistan rejected reports that it had attacked multiple places in India, saying such claims are “entirely unfounded” and part of a “reckless propaganda campaign”.

The Pakistan Foreign Office on Friday said it rejects the “baseless and irresponsible allegations propagated by the Indian media... These claims are unfounded, politically motivated and part of a reckless propaganda campaign aimed at maligning Pakistan.”

Pakistan also urged the international community to take serious note of this “dangerous behaviour”.

Pakistan said Indian air strikes and cross-border fire have killed 36 people and injured 57 in Pakistan and Pakistan-administered Kashmir. India’s Army reports at least 16 civilian deaths, including a woman and two children from Pakistani shelling.

Colonel Sofiya Qureshi holds a map showing that Pakistan did not close its civil airspace *PHOTO: PTI*

Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri blasted Pakistan’s “blatant lie”. He told media that Pakistan targeted places of worship. Misri said Islamabad’s thinking that India would attack its own cities is the kind of “deranged fantasy” that only Pakistani can come up with.

“Pakistan is trying desperately to impart a communal hue to the situation with an intention to create discord.”

Misri cited Pakistan’s attack on a gurdwara in Amritsar and its subsequent attempt to blame it on Indian armed forces. Misri was joined by Col Sofiya Qureshi of the army and Wing Commander Vyomika Singh.

“Pakistan did not close its civil airspace despite it launching a failed unprovoked drone and missile attack,” said Qureshi. “Pakistan is using civil airliners as a shield, knowing fully well that its attack on India would elicit a swift air defence response.”

Indian military launched armed drones launched at four air defence sites in Pakistan, destroying it.

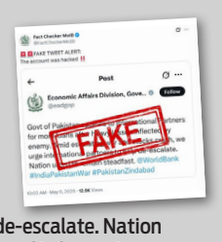
“On the night of 8-9 May, Pakistan carried out large-scale violations of Indian airspace, attempting to target military infrastructure with 300-400 drones across 36 locations from Leh to Sir Creek,” Singh said, adding that Pakistan used Turkish drones. *—PTI*

ANOTHER NIGHT OF DRONES

Drones reportedly targeted Srinagar airport, Awantipora air base, while more were sighted at Jammu, Samba, Punjab’s Pathankot and Ferozepur, and Rajasthan’s Jaisalmer. As of the time of publishing, the drones were intercepted. Blasts were heard in Jammu and parts of south Kashmir. At least three people were injured in Ferozepur.

PAK ASKS FOR MONEY ON ‘HACKED’ X

Islamabad, 9 May



Pakistan on Friday said that the X account of its Ministry of Economic Affairs was hacked. The false post read: “Govt of Pakistan appeals to International Partners for more loans after heavy losses ‘inflected’ by enemy. Amid escalating war and stocks crash, we urge international partners to help de-escalate. Nation urged to remain steadfast.” The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting issued a ‘FAKE TWEET ALERT’, saying the account was “hacked”. *—PTI*

INDIA DOESN’T VOTE ON IMF LOAN

New Delhi, 9 May

India abstained from voting at the IMF meeting that discussed extending fresh loans of USD 2.3 billion to Pakistan. The Congress however accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of chickening out by not giving a resounding “no”. *—PTI*

BLACKOUTS, SIRENS AGAIN

Parts of Jammu and the Kashmir valley went black for the second night. A blackout was enforced in districts in Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat in Ferozepur, Pathankot, Amritsar, Hoshiarpur, Fazilka, Muktsar Sangrur, Bilaspur and Kutch. Air raid sirens wailed in Ferozepur, Pathankot, Amritsar and Hoshiarpur districts. *—PTI*

EAM DIALS UK COUNTERPART

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Friday held a phone conversation with his British counterpart David Lammy and conveyed to him that there must be “zero-tolerance” to terrorism. “Our discussions centered around countering terrorism, for which there must be zero-tolerance,” the Jaishankar said in a social media post. *—PTI*

> **We’re not going to get involved in the middle of war that’s fundamentally none of our business and has nothing to do with America. America can’t tell the Indians to lay down their arms. We can’t tell the Pakistanis to lay down their arms**
>
> —JD Vance, US Vice President

K’TAKA BANS TOURISTS AT DAMS

Bengaluru, 9 May

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Friday said tourists will be barred from visiting dams and reservoirs in the State due to heightened security concerns following Operation Sindoor. He said that only technical experts and engineers would be permitted entry. All necessary steps had been taken to ensure the safety, he said.

Meanwhile, the Karnataka Power Corporation Limited (KPCL) said security was beefed up at power stations and reservoirs. KPCL operates power generation units using hydro, thermal, wind, solar, gas, and waste-to-energy sources. —PTI

OP SINDOOR

DAY 3

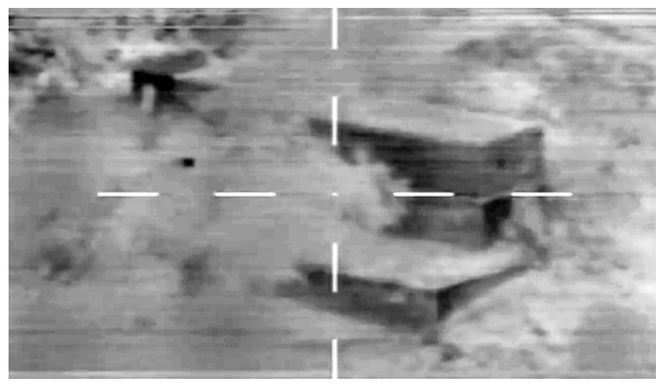
REPORT FAKE NEWS

The government has urged citizens to report any misinformation to PIB Fact Check amid the India-Pakistan conflict. Citizens can alert authorities on **Whatsapp: +91 8799711259 or email: factcheck@pib.gov.in.**

‘Avoid panic buying; India has enough food, fertiliser, fuel stocks’: Centre

THE WIRE BLOCKED?

The Wire, on Friday, said that the Union government had blocked access to its English website in India “in a clear violation of the Constitutional guarantee of freedom of the press”. The news portal released a statement saying that the website had been blocked by Internet service providers across the country, and added that the service providers cited orders from the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology under the IT Act, 2000, for blocking the website.



This video screengrab shows Indian Army neutralising a Pakistani target on Friday *PHOTO: PTI*

BSF kills 7 terrorists in Jammu, destroys Ranger’s camp

NEW DELHI/JAMMU, 9 MAY

- The terrorists were engaged around 11pm on Thursday in Samba district after a “big group” of terrorists was detected by the surveillance grid

The Border Security Force (BSF) killed at least seven terrorists who were allegedly trying to infiltrate the India-Pakistan International Border in Jammu on Friday. The BSF also destroyed a Pakistan Rangers post.

The terrorists were engaged around 11pm on Thursday in Samba district after a “big group” of terrorists was detected by the surveillance grid. The infiltration bid was supported by fire from a Rangers post Dhandhar, a BSF spokesperson said.

He said the troops neutralised the infiltration bid, killing at least seven terrorists and caused “extensive” damage to the Dhandhar post.

Officials said there could be more terrorists.

BSF also shared a thermal imager clip of the firing and “destruction” of a bunker of the said post where a heavy machine gun of the Rangers was mounted.

SHELLING STILL ON

Meanwhile, a woman was killed and two of her family members injured after Pakistani troops resorted to heavy shelling in areas near the Line of Control (LoC) in the Uri sector of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said.

Multiple areas of Uri, including Silikot, Boniyar, Kamalkote, Mohra and Gingle, were targeted with heavy shelling that damaged several structures and forced people to flee, they added.

Officials said three members of a family were injured when a shell hit their car near Mohra while they were trying to move to safety. They were rushed to a hospital where a woman, Nargis Begum, succumbed to injuries, officials said.

Early on Friday, Pakistani troops violated the ceasefire in Gouhalan and Chotali, Tourna Post of the Uri. *—PTI*

>>>**More on Pages 2, 3, 5, 6, 7**

KIA asks travellers to arrive 3 hrs before departure

BENGALURU 9 MAY

Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) on Friday issued an advisory urging passengers to arrive at least three hours before departure. The airport cited increased screening as part of a nationwide alert and asked travellers to coordinate with their airlines for the latest updates. Meanwhile, Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd has also been placed on alert with all leaves of staffers being cancelled. ***—Salar News***

Miss World pageant kicks off in Hyd today

HYDERABAD, 9 MAY

The 72nd Miss World pageant is set to begin with an opening ceremony at Gachibowli indoor stadium on 10 May, marking India’s second consecutive year as host. A total of 115 contestants from around the globe have arrived, with more expected. This year, the theme is ‘Beauty with a Purpose’. The Telangana government has made extensive arrangements for the event. The finale will be held on 31 May. ***—PTI***

Trump considers cutting China tariffs to 80% amid talks

US President Donald Trump seems to be softening his stance on tariffs after China’s Xi Jinping slapped reciprocal tariffs *PHOTO: X*

WASHINGTON, 9 MAY

- Senior US officials are set to engage with a high-level Chinese delegation in Switzerland, marking the first significant talks since the initiation of the trade war

President Donald Trump has suggested reducing tariffs on Chinese imports from 145 per cent to 80 per cent as he aims to de-escalate tensions between the two nations ahead of crucial trade discussions. Senior US officials are set to engage with a high-level Chinese delegation in Switzerland, marking the first significant talks since the initiation of the trade war.

“80 per cent tariff on China seems right! Up to Scott B,” Trump stated on social media, referring to Treasury Chief Scott Bessent. He also urged China to open its markets to US goods, proclaiming: “WOULD BE SO GOOD FOR THEM!!! CLOSED MARKETS DON’T WORK ANYMORE!!!”

Bessent and US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer are scheduled to meet their counterparts in Geneva as concerns grow among US markets regarding the inflationary pressures and supply disruptions.

China retaliated with its own tariffs following the imposition of US’ “Liberation Day” tariffs on 2 April.

While Trump previously indicated he would not consider lowering tariffs without discussions, he has recently softened his stance, suggesting possibilities for reductions. The administration faces challenges in reconciling the need for tariff revenues with aspirations for increased market access for US goods. *—PTI*

THE AFTERMATH

IPL suspended for 1 week amid border tension

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

The Indian Premier League (IPL) has been suspended for one week because of the deepening military confrontation between India and Pakistan. The BCCI on Friday said national interest trumps other considerations.

“The BCCI has decided to suspend the remainder of the ongoing IPL with immediate effect for one week,” Board of Cricket Control India (BCCI) Secretary Devajit Saikia stated in a press release. “At this critical juncture, the BCCI stands firmly with the nation. We express our solidarity with the Government of India, the Armed Forces and the people of our country.”

A cloud of uncertainty loomed over the future of the ongoing edition since the cancellation of Thursday’s match between Punjab Kings and Delhi Capitals in Dharamsala midway, following the air raid alerts in neighbouring cities of Jammu and Pathankot.

The high-profile league was to wind up on 25 May in Kolkata as per the original schedule. The BCCI may reschedule the remaining 16 matches (12 league and four knockouts) at an opportune time. There is speculation that September could be an option if the scheduled Asia Cup is scrapped.

The military confrontation had caused significant anxiety among the foreign players, sources said. They will be flying back over the next few days. 62 overseas players were signed up by the 10 franchises. *—PTI*

NOT THE FIRST IPL DISRUPTION

In 2009, the entire tournament was moved to South Africa because of security issues amid the Lok Sabha elections. In 2020, the tournament was played in the UAE in September instead of the usual April-May window due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The following year, the event began in India, scheduled for March-April in a bio-bubble, but was halted when players began testing positive. The league was eventually completed in the UAE in September that year.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar and others take part in the Tiranga Yatra rally from KR Circle to Minsk Square in support of the Indian Army amid the ongoing 'Operation Sindoor', in Bengaluru, on Friday

PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

Cong holds 'Tiranga Yatra' in City to support armed forces

City mosques hold special Friday prayers for peace, unity, and strength

BENGALURU, 9 MAY

A large crowd gathered at KR Circle in City on Friday as the ruling Congress in State organised the 'Jai Hind Tiranga Yatra' to express solidarity with the Indian armed forces that carried out Operation Sindoor.

The Indian tricolour fluttered at the venue amid loud chants of 'Jai Hind-Jai Bharat-Jai Tiranga', 'Bharat Zindabad' (Long Live India), 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' (Victory to India), and 'Our soldiers are our pride'.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, his deputy DK Shivakumar, and several senior Ministers participated in the march, which began at KR Circle and concluded at M Chinnaswamy Stadium.

"Soldiers are our national pride. We stand in solidarity with them to convey that the entire country is behind them," Shivakumar said.

Mosques hold spl prayers

Meanwhile, City mosques witnessed special Friday prayers seeking peace, unity, and strength for Indian soldiers.

The special prayers were offered at all the mosques including Masjid-e-Bilal (Jayanagar), Masjid-e-Khadria (Benson Town), and Jamia Masjid (KR Market), where worshippers gathered in large numbers to offer Duas (prayers). Imams used the Friday sermons to denounce terrorism, condemn the Pahalgam terror attack, and call for national solidarity.

In parts of rural Bengaluru, some worshippers wore black armbands in silent protest, mourning the victims of the Pahalgam attack.

Similar prayers were held across mosques in districts including Bengaluru Rural, Udupi, Bidar, and Kalaburagi. In Udupi district alone, congregations in Kapu, Karkala, Kundapur, and Malpe offered collective prayers after Jum'ah. In Bidar, dozens of mosques including Jamia Masjid and Abdul Faiza mosque held special services.

Minister for Minorities Welfare, Zameer Ahmed Khan, who offered prayers at a Sheshadripuram mosque in Benagluru, reiterated the state's stand on condemning terror.

A day earlier, he had formally written to the Waqf Board requesting Statewide special prayers.

—Salar News with agencies

Muslims pray at Modi Masjid at Tasker Town in Bengaluru for the soldiers at India's borders, on Friday

PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

Do not spread rumours, Top Cop warns citizens

Bengaluru, 9 May

In view of escalating tensions along India–Pakistan border, City Police Commissioner B Dayananda on Friday cautioned citizens against spreading unverified news on social media. Speaking after reviewing monthly service parade at City Armed Reserve Grounds in Adugodi, Commissioner instructed senior police officials attached to the cyber police stations to be alert and act responsibly. "In such sensitive times, false information can trigger unnecessary panic," he said. Responding to reports of panic buying and artificial shortages of essential goods, he directed immediate action and legal measures against those found creating such situations. He emphasised that, "The police must prioritise coordination and truth at every level." *—Salar News*

Student booked for 'pro-Pak' post

Vijayapura, 9 May

Vijayapura police have filed a suo motu case against a MBBS student for social media post allegedly in favour of Pakistan. Tashavrudha, on her Instagram had written "To my Pakistani friends, people IOJK AJK avoid going near military, government installations. If you are living close to 200kms border radius, please move inland. May Allah protect us from India, Ameen." She had also attached Pakistani flag to the post. As the post gained traction and case was filed, she apologised saying, "It was my foolishness for posting such message, I'm an Indian and will remain and in favour of nation." *—Salar News*

Man arrested in Kolar for FB post

Kolar, 9 May

Gulpet police in Kolar arrested Munir Khan Kureshi, resident of Kumbarpet, Kolar for airing allegedly anti-national content on his YouTube channel. The accused allegedly made a video on the Pahalgam terror attacked and depicted it as orchestred by the Union Government with a view to consolidate Hindu votes in upcoming Bihar Assembly elections. Police said that by airing the video, he intended to disturb the communal peace of society. Khan was produced before the taluk magistrate and later released in bail. *—Salar News*

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar with Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah

PHOTO: PTI

State Cabinet defers caste census discussion

BENGALURU, 9 MAY

The State Cabinet on Friday decided to take up the caste census report in the next meeting, State Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister HK Patil said.

Minister stated that some Ministers had not yet given their opinion as requested by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

He said some ministers had provided their opinion in writing, while others were yet to submit their viewpoints on the Social and Educational Survey Report, also known as the caste census.

This is the third time the discussion has been deferred.

On 9 May, no decision was taken, and the matter was again deferred.

The cabinet also decided to implement the Greater Bengaluru Act from 15 May, Minister said.

The Act proposes the decentralisation of governance in Bengaluru through multiple municipal corporations.

The Act suggests the founding of the Greater Bengaluru Authority, in which the Chief Minister will be the ex-officio chairperson, the Minister in charge of Bengaluru will be the vice-chairperson, and the Chief Commissioner of the GBA will be the ex-officio member secretary.

In light of prevailing war-like situation in the country, the cabinet decided to postpone the event celebrating two years of Congress government in the State, Minister said.

Siddaramaiah government had planned to hold a grand event in Vijayanagara district on May 20.

The cabinet approved granting a civic amenity site for the Congress building in Chikkaballapur at a subsidised rate, Patil said. *—PTI*

Shetty's murder: Khader open to NIA probe

BENGALURU, 9 MAY

State Assembly Speaker UT Khader said he has no objection if the the National Investigation Agency (NIA) probes the murder of Hindutva activist Suhas Shetty. This comes amid mounting pressure from the BJP for NIA probe.

Suhas Shetty

PHOTO: PTI

Speaking to reporters in Mangaluru on Friday, Khader said, "Let the ruling and Opposition parties discuss. If the government decides to transfer the case to the NIA, we have no issue." Khader's response comes after Opposition Leader R Ashok led a BJP delegation to Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot, demanding the case be handed over to the NIA. Ashok alleged that Congress was shielding the accused and linked the killing to an international contract funded by compensation given to a Muslim youth's family. He accused Khader of defending the family, despite police claims of their involvement. The Speaker however called these allegations baseless.

Ashok further claimed that the case is part of a larger terror-linked plot with Pakistan connections.

On 3 May, Mangaluru police arrested eight people linked to murder of Hindutva activist Shetty on 1 May. *—Salar News*

On 3 May, Mangaluru police arrested eight people linked to murder of Hindutva activist Shetty

PHOTO: SALAR

Three cops held for extortion from swindlers

BENGALURU, 9 MAY

Three policemen from the Chikkajala Police Station have been arrested by City Police for allegedly extorting Rs 6 lakh from a group involved in a money-doubling racket.

The accused include two head constables and a constable.

According to sources, the officers acted on a tip-off about fraudsters operating near a prominent hotel in Chikkajala jurisdiction.

Instead of booking a case, the policemen allegedly detained the suspects, interrogated them, and then extorted Rs 6 lakh for letting them go without filing any charges.

The matter came to light a few days later when the same group was reportedly robbed of Rs 44 lakh while travelling through the City police limits. *—Salar News*

PEOPLE-CENTRIC SOLUTION

BWSSB launches doorstep Cauvery water supply scheme

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar launched the projects, in front of Vidhana Soudha on Friday

PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

BENGALURU 9 MAY

In a major step towards ensuring clean and reliable water access in the city, the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) on Friday launched two ambitious schemes — "Sarvarigu Sanchari Cauvery" and "Mane Bagilige Sarala Cauvery" — to deliver BIS-certified Cauvery water directly to residents via mobile-booked tankers.

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar inaugurated the initiative at Vidhana Soudha, calling it a "people-centric solution" to the growing summer water crisis and a strong move against unregulated private tanker mafia.

The schemes, currently in pilot mode, use a web-based mobile application allowing users to book water tankers through https://owc.bwssb.gov.in/member/register. Features include secure OTP-based delivery, GPS tracking of tankers, digital payments, and real-time status updates.

BWSSB Chairman V Ram Prasat Manohar said the software ensures transparency with pre-calculated charges based on water volume and delivery distance. Each tanker, fitted with GPS and RFID systems, will draw Cauvery water from over 100 connect points targeting areas without piped water.

Deliveries, limited to 6am to 10pm daily, must be booked 24 hours in advance. Tankers, with 6,000 and 12,000 litre capacities, can make up to eight trips per day. *—Salar News*

Kerala man nabbed with Rs 3 crore drugs in City

BENGALURU, 9 MAY

The police seized 100 kg of ganja worth over Rs 3 crore from an apartment in Karpoora village in Anekal taluk in Bengaluru Urban district on Friday.

The primary accused identified as Sachin from Kerala, was taken into custody after he attempted to flee by jumping from the apartment's first floor and fractured his leg in the process. He is currently undergoing treatment at the Narayana Health City.

Three other suspects, Rashi, Sanju and Umaid were absconding.

The police also recovered weighing scales, packing tapes and several ganja packets, suggesting the gang repackaged and distributed the contraband from the flat.

The gang reportedly sourced ganja from other States and sold it to local customers.

The case is part of a broader crackdown by City police, who arrested 59 drug peddlers in April and seized substantial amount of narcotics. *—Salar News*

Govt, GAIL signs Rs 5K cr MoU for RE projects

BENGALURU, 9 MAY

State government and GAIL (India) Ltd, a public sector enterprise in natural gas sector, signed Rs 5,000 crore MoU on Friday to establish approximately 1 GW of renewable energy (RE) capacity in State, officials said. State Minister for Large and Medium Industries and Infrastructure Development MB Patil said the MoU reaffirms State's position as preferred destination for clean and sustainable energy investments. *—PTI*

Centre asks states to empower civil defence authorities

States and Centre can now decide to take necessary steps in case of an attack

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

The Centre has asked all states to give emergency procurement power to the heads of the civil defence authorities so that they can make the required purchases in case of an emergency situation.

Section 11 of the Civil Defence Act and Rules, 1968, empowers states to take certain necessary measures for the protection of people and properties or for ensuring maintenance of vital services in the event of a hostile attack.

The rules give powers to Central and State governments to take necessary measures before, during and after any attack. Here is some of what it encompasses:

Controlling lights
To protect against attacks, government can ban light displays. Doors and windows must be covered, street lights can be shut off too. Vehicles too may be asked to cover lights. Govt can restrict activities involving loud sounds or smoke to reduce exposure to enemies. Buildings maybe asked to paint their roofs in order to camouflage.

Security forces prepare for a mock drill in Agra on Friday *PHOTO: PTI*

Fire prevention
Properties may be asked to ensure fire safety measures.

Build Air raid shelters
Governments may take up construction of air raid shelters in vulnerable areas.

—Salar News with Agencies

Centre allows for mobilising Territorial Army

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

In a significant move in response to the ongoing military conflict with Pakistan, the Indian government has authorised the Army Chief to mobilise the Territorial Army (TA). A notification issued by the Ministry of Defence highlights that all officers and enrolled personnel may be called upon to support the regular Army.

The notification, dated 6 May, comes into effect on 10 February 2025 and will remain valid until 9 February 2028. The TA, established on 9 October 1949, has played a vital role in national security, humanitarian efforts, and environmental protection over 75 years. *—PTI*

Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi *PHOTO: PTI*

According to the directive, the Army Chief can mobilise 14 of the 32 existing infantry battalions from the TA across various commands, including Southern, Eastern, Western, and Northern Commands. However, the embodiment of these units is contingent on budgetary provisions. *—PTI*

Pune college student arrested for pro-Pak post

PUNE, 9 MAY

Pune police on Friday arrested a 19-year-old woman student of an engineering college here for allegedly posting a message on social media in support of Pakistan, an official said.

A Hindu rightwing group had claimed that Khatija Shaikh had posted the slogan "Pakistan Zindabad" among other things on her Instagram account.

A case was registered against her at Kondhwa police station under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita sections 152 (acts endangering sovereignty, unity and integrity of India), 196 (promoting enmity between different groups), 299 (outraging religious feelings) and 352 (intentional insult intended to provoke a breach of peace).

"She has been arrested and further probe is underway," said Rajkumar Shinde, deputy commissioner of police (zone 5). *—PTI*

Rajnath reviews security; meets PM

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh carried out a comprehensive review of the national security scenario with the top military leadership.

Rajnath's meeting, was attended by Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan, Army Chief Gen Upendra Dwivedi, Air Chief Marshal AP Singh, Navy Chief Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi and Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh.

After the meeting, Rajnath met Prime Minister Narendra Modi with National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, and the three service chiefs and the Chief of Defence Staff.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh at a high level meeting with the heads of Defence, Army and Navy *PHOTO: PTI*

Similarly, Home Minister Amit Shah reviewed the prevailing situation along India's border with Pakistan while Union Health Minister JP Nadda reviewed health infrastructure preparedness across hospitals in the country.

Apart from reviewing the security situation along the India-Pakistan border, Shah also took stock of the steps taken to beef up security at airports across the country, the sources said.

While the BSF guards the India-Pakistan border, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) protects the airports in the country, Metro networks and other vital installations.

Those who attended the meeting included Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan, Director of Intelligence Bureau Tapan Deka, Directors General of the BSF, CISF and the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security.

Meanwhile, Nadda and his team assessed the readiness of hospitals and health facilities across the country. *—PTI*

This continuous escalation from Pakistan's side benefits no one. Pakistan gains nothing from this, nor will they succeed. They should silence their guns and help normalise the situation here.

-Omar Abdullah, J&K Chief Minister

We are at war with the terrorists, and we will, as I said, bring justice to the victims and hold them accountable

-Vinay Kwatra, Indian Ambassador to the US

We have seen whenever there is a military action, it only treats symptoms, it does not treat the root cause of the problem. Nothing can be achieved from military intervention.

-Mehbooba Mufti, PDP Chief

We agree with military action against terrorists, their infrastructure in Pakistan. We all have to be cautious and do not let any conspiracy of anti-national forces succeed.

-Mohan Bhagwat, RSS Chief

Bomb-like objects recovered in Jaisalmer

The object resembled parts of a drone that was launched by Pakistan on Jaisalmer *PHOTO: PTI*

JAIPUR/HOSHIARPUR/ BATHINDA/NURPUR, 9 MAY

A bomb-like object was found in the Kishanghat area of Rajasthan's Jaisalmer district on Friday morning, prompting swift action by the local police and air force. Metal wreckage was also found in Punjab, while a 'bomb-like' object caused a crater in Himachal Pradesh.

Police said the object was found near a nursery in the colony of the Jogis, in Kishanghat under Kotwali police station. The area has been cordoned off.

Kotwali SHO Prem Daan said it seems to be a bomb-like object. Experts from the army are on their way Kishanghat to defuse it. "It it currently not known if it is live or damaged." The object resembled parts of a drone that was launched by Pakistan on Jaisalmer on Thursday night around 10.30pm. However, official confirmation is awaited.

On Thursday, the sound of explosions rocked Jaisalmer and a blackout was enforced in western Rajasthan districts bordering Pakistan.

A top official confirmed a massive sound was heard in Jaisalmer. After a brief lull, the sound of explosions continued for nearly an hour.

Similarly, in Punjab, debris resembling parts of a missile was found in a field in Hoshiarpur, while metal parts of some unidentified objects were discovered at two locations in Bathinda, officials said.

Similarly, in Himachal Pradesh's Kangra, a piece of iron was found, after a late night explosion shook the area. Locals who inspected the spot found only a crater. *—PTI*

25-yr-old Agniveer killed in Pak firing

KALLI THANDA, 9 MAY

Mudavath Murali Naik, an Agniveer from Kalli Thanda village in Gorantla mandal in Andhra Pradesh was killed at 2am on Friday during an exchange of fire in a reserve area in Jammu and Kashmir.

"Murali, our only son, died fighting for the country, leaving us orphaned," said his father, Sriram Naik, who left it to the country to decide the support his family would get.

Murali, 23, joined the Army in November 2022 as an Agniveer and belonged to 851 Light Regiment of the Indian Army's Northern Command.

He was posted in Assam for a year and later transferred to Jammu for six months. He had called his family to enquire about their welfare on 7 May.

"My son died for the country. He fought for the country. What makes us sad is that I have only one son. We depended on him, and our support is gone. Now we have become orphans, my wife and I. Whatever the solution, I leave it to the country. Whatever decision it will take is up to the country," said Sriram.

Murali Naik *PHOTO: PTI*

I have only one son. We depended on him, and our support is gone. Now we have become orphans, my wife and I.

-Sriram Naik, father of Mudavath Murali Naik

"He (Murali Naik) spoke the day before yesterday (on the phone). He asked how we all were and if we had food. Told him we had," said Jyothi Bai, holding back her tears amid the gloomy atmosphere at her home in their tribal settlement.

"He died young. What can we do?" Jyothi said tearfully.

State Handlooms Minister S Savitha visited the family in Kalli Thanda village and handed over a financial aid of Rs 5 lakh.

Murali's statue will be installed at Gorantla mandal.

Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, Chandrababu Naidu and A Revanth Reddy, Andhra Pradesh Governor S Abdul Nazeer and several other political leaders condoled his death.

Naidu also comforted the grieving parents over a call. The final rites of the slain soldier are expected to take place on 10 May. *—PTI*

SCHOOLS SHUT, IT'S BACK TO ONLINE CLASSES FOR MANY

The conflict has left school children suffering. In Leh, all schools will stay shut on 9 and 10 May. Meanwhile in Kashmir, schools have switched to online classes to ensure that students do not lose precious academic time. Schools have been shut here since 7 May.

In Bengal, many private schools declared summer vacations from Friday.

In Delhi, many private schools shifted to online classes too.

STATES ON HIGH ALERT

Gujarat: Border districts Kutch, Banaskantha, Patan and Jamnagar are on "high alert".

Maharashtra: Police, Coast Guard and Navy are on alert. The government cancelled leaves of top officials in health, disaster management and other departments.

Delhi: The civil defence directorate tested air raid siren atop the multistorey PWD building in ITO on Friday. More sirens will be installed as Delhi stays on alert.

Odisha: Security is tightened in all key installations, including the Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Balasore district, Army Air Defence College, ordnance factory, INS Chilka and the Indian Rare Earths Ltd.

Uttarakhand too is on alert, especially at its borders.

Rajasthan: Drones and bursting of crackers are banned in Jaisalmer. Markets shut by 5pm and blackouts start at 6pm for 12 hours. Residents have been asked to cover doors and windows of their houses so that no light is visible.

Punjab: The government cancelled leaves of Indian Administrative Service (IAS) and Punjab Civil Services (PCS) officers and also police personnel. Cinemas and shopping malls are shut in Mohali. Authorities banned inverters, generators and any other power backup for outdoor lights, billboard, street lights etc.

Man supporting Pakistan on Instagram arrested

SAMBAL, 9 MAY

A man was arrested in Uttar Pradesh's Sambhal for allegedly posting content in support of Pakistan on Instagram on Friday.

The accused, Mohammad Riyaz, 25, had allegedly posted, "No matter what happens, we have to support Pakistan," along with displaying the Pakistani flag as his Instagram profile picture.

He was booked under Section 152 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and sent to judicial custody. *—PTI*

GOVT JUNKS CLAIMS

Suicide attack in Rajouri is fake news

NEW DELHI/JAMMU, 9 MAY

The government on Friday dismissed claims of a suicide attack on an Army brigade in Rajouri in Jammu and Kashmir and a drone attack in Jalandhar.

The Press Information Bureau's (PIB) Fact Check Unit found that there was no "fidayeen" or suicide attack on any Army cantonment in Jammu and Kashmir, while the video claiming to be that of a drone attack in Jalandhar pertained to a farm fire. The news circulated on social media was deemed as 'fake news' by government sources.

"A total of seven videos were fact-checked between 22:00 hours on 8 May 8, 2025, and 06:30 hours on 9 May. A list of the fact-checked videos, along with their links, has been compiled," the PIB said.

Social media posts claiming a "Fidayeen" attack on the Indian Army are FAKE
The claim of an attack on Gujarat's Hazira Port by Pakistan is FAKE.
FAKE
'FIDAYEEN' ATTACK THREAT

PIB Fact Check found there was no suicide attack on any Army cantonment in J&K, while a video claimed an attack *PHOTO: PTI*

"A barrage of co-ordinated disinformation has been carried out by certain social media handles in general, and mainstream media in particular in Pakistan, with the sole objective to instil fear among the Indian masses," a PIB statement said.

A fake letter attributed to a non-existent "Chief of Army Staff, Gen V K Narayan" also surfaced, which the PIB confirmed to be fabricated.

Reiterating its commitment to countering disinformation and safeguarding national integrity, the PIB urged citizens to rely only on verified sources and refrain from sharing any unverified content.

The claims on social media about attacks on certain Indian targets peaked as India, on Thursday, thwarted Pakistan's attempts to target its military sites, including in Jammu, Pathankot, Udhampur, Uttarlai and Bhuj, with drones and missiles as tensions soared between the two countries amid fears of a wider military conflict. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

GPS tracker seized from US national at Jabalpur airport

JABALPUR, 9 MAY

Authorities at Dumna Airport in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, confiscated a prohibited GPS tracker from a US national, Angela K Parinar, aged 62, on 9 May. The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) conducted a routine check and discovered the device in her hand luggage as she was preparing to board a flight to Delhi. City Superintendent of Police, Santosh Kumar Sahu, confirmed that carrying and using GPS trackers is banned during air travel in India, as per the Telecommunication Act. Ms Parinar explained that she intended to use the tracker to share her location with family, citing her age as the reason for needing assistance. After the device's seizure, she was permitted to continue her journey. *—PTI*

Security forces arrest 9 militants in Manipur

IMPHAL, 9 MAY

Security forces in Manipur apprehended nine militants from various proscribed outfits across three districts on 9 May. Among those arrested were four active members of the banned Kangleipak Communist Party (MFL) captured in Thoubal district. In a separate operation, three cadres of the outlawed United National Liberation Front (Pambei) were detained near Lilong Bridge. Additionally, a militant from the Kangleipak Communist Party (Noyon) was taken into custody in Imphal East, alongside another from the KCP (PWG) in Bishnupur. Officials reported that arms and munitions, including country-made pistols and hand grenades, were seized from the militants. This operation aims at combating insurgency in the region. *—PTI*

3 poachers held in Similipal National Park

BARIPADA, 9 MAY

The Odisha forest department apprehended three poachers within Similipal National Park on May 9 while they were allegedly attempting to hunt wild animals. The individuals were arrested on the premise and found to be in possession of three country-made firearms. Following their capture, they were presented to the Chief Judicial Magistrate's court in Baripada, which subsequently remanded them into judicial custody. An FIR has been registered against the accused for breaching the Arms Act of 1959. The suspects are reported to hail from the Mayurbhanj district. This operation reflects the concerted efforts of forest authorities to protect wildlife. *—PTI*

Tahawwur Rana shifted to Tihar, say jail officials

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

Tahawwur Hussain Rana, an accused in the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack, was taken to the Tihar Jail amid heavy security on Friday evening, jail sources said. Earlier in the day, a Delhi court remanded Rana in judicial custody after he was produced before special National Investigation Agency (NIA) Judge Chander Jit Singh, a day before his NIA custody ended. "Rana was taken to the Tihar Jail after he was remanded in judicial custody. There was heavy security during his arrival and he will be kept in the high-security zone of the prison," a source said. Rana, a close associate of the main conspirator of the 26/11 attack, David Coleman Headley alias Daood Gilani, a US citizen, was brought to India after the US Supreme Court on April 4 dismissed his review plea against his extradition. *—PTI*

'Don't bring down morale of women officers at this time'

SC tells Centre it could use their services somewhere else

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

The Supreme Court on Friday asked the Centre not to release from service short service commission women Army officers challenging the denial of permanent commission to them, asking not to "bring their morale down" in "the prevailing situation".

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kotiswar Singh, which posted pleas filed by 69 officers for hearing in August, said they should not be released till the next hearing.

"In the prevailing situation let's not bring their morale down. They are brilliant officers, you can use their services somewhere else...," Justice Kant said.

Additional solicitor general Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, urged the top court not to grant any stay on their release as every year only 250 personnel were granted permanent commission.

The Additional Solicitor General urged the top court not to grant any stay on women Army officers' release as every year only 250 personnel were granted permanent commission *PHOTO: K@LAW_TREND*

Senior advocate Maneka Guruswamy, appearing for colonel Geeta Sharma, referred to the case of Colonel Sofia Qureshi, who had to approach this court for a similar relief but has made the country proud by briefing the media on 'Operation Sindoor'.

The bench said the case was a legal one, having nothing to do with the officers' achievements.

The top court in 2020 had said absolute exclusion of women from all positions, except staff assignments, in the Army was indefensible and their blanket non-consideration for command appointments without any justification couldn't be sustained in law.

The SC said an absolute prohibition of women short service commission officers to only staff appointments did not fulfill the purpose of granting permanent commission as a means of career advancement in the Army. Since the 2020 verdict, the top court has passed several orders on the issue of permanent commission to women officers in the armed forces. *— PTI*

SC demotes officer for flouting order

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

The Supreme Court has ordered the demotion of a deputy collector in Andhra Pradesh to the position of tehsildar due to his defiance of a high court directive. The officer forcibly removed hutments in Guntur district in January 2014, despite a court order prohibiting such actions. The bench, comprising Justices BR Gavai and Augustine George Masih, emphasised that adherence to court orders is essential for upholding the rule of law. While the court modified a prior two-month prison sentence to demotion and imposed a fine of Rs 1 lakh, it underscored that no individual is above the law. *—PTI*

SC stalls case against Kejriwal, Atishi

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

The Supreme Court has extended its interim order pausing the criminal defamation case against former Delhi Chief Ministers Arvind Kejriwal and Atishi. The case stems from remarks made by the two leaders concerning the alleged deletion of 30 lakh names from the electoral rolls in 2018. BJP leader Rajeev Babbar filed the complaint. A bench comprising Justices MM Sundresh and Rajesh Bindal adjourned the case, having previously issued notices to the Delhi Police and Babbar. The Delhi High Court earlier ruled that the statements made by Kejriwal and Atishi were prima facie defamatory. *—PTI*

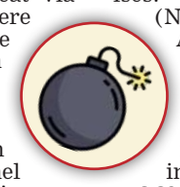
Inspections by teams of bomb disposal squad and police proved that the threats were a hoax *PHOTO: X@LGOENCHONEWS*

Bomb threat to Goa, New Delhi, Chennai & Mumbai buildings

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

Four places- two cricket stadiums in New Delhi and Chennai, a collectorate in North Goa and the Tata Memorial Hospital in Mumbai received bomb threats on Friday morning, leading to a panic situation.

The Delhi and District Cricket Association (DDCA) received a bomb threat via email claiming of there being a bomb at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi.



Teams of bomb disposal squad (BDS) and dog squad along with Delhi Police personnel soon rushed to the stadium, which along with the surrounding area was checked thoroughly, though nothing suspicious was found.

"After receiving a bomb threat via email, we immediately informed the Delhi Police. They came and inspected the whole venue. Nothing was found," DDCA secretary Ashok Sharma said.

In a similar incident, the cricket stadium in also received a threat via email that a bomb would be detonated if cricket events were held here.

An investigation is underway.

Meanwhile, the collectorate in North Goa received a bomb threat via email, prompting the police to evacuate the building and search the premises. Additional collector (North) Mahadev Araundekar said his office had received an email from a person identified as Utpal Laxman Rao, threatening a blast at the building if not vacated by 3.30pm on Friday. While a police team evacuated the building, a bomb detection disposal squad searched the premises to ensure the building was safe to allow the staff to resume work.

The Tata Memorial Hospital in Mumbai also here received a similar threat on via email, which turned out to be a hoax after nothing suspicious was found. *—PTI*

Local residents alleged that a few forest department officials tried to illegally divert 42 acres of forest land *PHOTO: FREEPIK*

M'rashtra probes bid to grab forest land

MUMBAI, 9 MAY

The Maharashtra government has ordered an investigation into alleged attempts to grab 42 acres of forest land in Nagpur district, an official said on Friday.

After receiving complaints about the alleged land-grab bid, Revenue Minister Chandrashekhar Bawankule held a high-level meeting at the state secretariat on Thursday and asked top officials to submit a report on the matter, he said.

District Collector Vipin Itankar and senior forest officials were present at the meeting.

Local residents have alleged that a few forest department officials colluded with some people and tried to illegally divert 42 acres of forest land by manipulating the allotment process, said the minister's office.

"Those responsible will not be spared under any circumstances," Bawankule said, terming it a case of serious corruption.

He instructed the suspension of the staffers facing investigation, and ordered the Nagpur district collector and the Forest Department to submit a detailed report immediately, said the statement.

Assuring a thorough and independent probe, the minister also said that the investigation will check if any local residents were involved in the conspiracy to grab government land.

"We will get to the root of this scam and take strict action," said the statement, quoting the minister. *—PTI*

Himanta urges people to end Bihu events

GUWAHATI, 9 MAY

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday called for the conclusion of Bihu functions by May 10 and bring the celebrations to a "graceful close".

Though Sarma did not specify any reason, soaring tensions between India and Pakistan is believed to be the basis of his appeal. "Over the past month, we have joyfully celebrated Bihu with numerous cultural events. I sincerely thank everyone for their enthusiastic participation and contributions," he said in a post on X.

"However, the time has now come to conclude this festive season," Sarma said, appealing for cancellation of all remaining Bihu functions scheduled from 10 May onwards. "Let us bring this vibrant celebration to a graceful close, with the same unity and spirit with which it was celebrated," the chief minister said. *—PTI*

Heat wave alert for eastern India

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has announced the onset of a fresh heat wave over eastern India commencing from Saturday. This warning coincides with ongoing rainfall and thunderstorms across northwest and central India, expected to continue for the next four to five days.

The IMD has forecasted that isolated pockets of sub-Himalayan West Bengal and Sikkim will experience heatwave conditions from 11 to 12 May, while Gangetic West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand, and east Uttar Pradesh are also likely to face elevated temperatures in the coming days.

PHOTO: FREEPIK

In Rajasthan, recent weather patterns have brought light to moderate rain and thunderstorms, attributed to a western disturbance. Tonk recorded the highest rainfall, tallying 83 mm, while Jaisalmer emerged as the hottest location in the state, reaching 41 degrees Celsius. However, a decline in precipitation is anticipated from 12 to 13 May, with temperatures expected to rise by 3 to 5 degrees.

Earlier, the IMD noted that India is likely to experience normal to above-normal rainfall, with the potential for occasional thunderstorms to temper the heat. The country recorded a total of 72 heatwave days in April, marking an increase in heatwave occurrences compared to previous years.

Meanwhile, heat wave conditions are likely in some districts of South Bengal and parts of North Bengal from 10 May, the department said on Friday. *—PTI*

Kerala's 6 Nipah suspects test -ve

MALAPPURAM, 9 MAY

The Kerala government on Friday said that all six people, who showed symptoms after coming into contact with a Nipah virus patient in Malappuram district have tested negative. However, the condition of the 42-year-old woman who contracted the infection remained serious, officials said.

Health Minister Veena George said that strict preventive measures will continue across the district to ensure public safety. She chaired a high-level core committee meeting at the Malappuram District Collectorate to review the ongoing response.

Meanwhile, authorities said on Friday that Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's programme scheduled to be held in Malappuram district on 12 May has been postponed in the wake of the confirmation of a Nipah case in the district.

Health officials said the condition of a 42-year-old woman who contracted the infection remained serious *PHOTO: ANI*

In addition, an anti-drug campaign scheduled to be held in the district on Saturday under the leadership of the State Minister for Sports V Abdurahiman has also been postponed for the same reason, officials said. *—PTI*

AIR STRIKE ALERT

Punjab, Rajasthan residents recount night of horror

CHANDIGARH/ JAISALMER, 9 MAY

Schools were closed, most people stayed indoors and the occasional siren rang out as people in many border districts woke up to a tense Friday morning, calm but anxious about how the day would unfold.

People in Punjab's border districts, including Amritsar, Pathankot, Ferozepur and Gurdaspur, spent an anxious night as authorities enforced a complete blackout amid the heightened tensions.

Punjab and Rajasthan share borders of 532-km and 1,070 km with Pakistan respectively.

Residents in Ferozepur were apprehensive of the rumours doing the rounds.

Special prayers for peace were also held at some gurdwaras in the state.

A farmer carrying fodder on a cart moves past the Integrated Check Post near the Attari-Wagah border amid rise in tension between India and Pakistan, in Amritsar district, Punjab, Friday *PHOTO: PTI*

The administration later sounded a fresh air raid siren, appealing to people to remain indoors, the alert was over after an hour.

Similar sirens were sounded in Haryana's Panchkula and Ambala.

People in Rajasthan's border districts also recounted a night of fear and uncertainty amid sounds of loud explosions and a complete blackout.

The authorities extended the blackout in Jaisalmer till 6am on Friday.

Meanwhile, a bomb-like object was found in a nursery in the Kishanghat area of Jaisalmer district on Friday morning, prompting swift action by the local police and air force.

Experts from the army were on their way to "defuse" it and the area was cordoned off.

In Himachal Pradesh, the district administration in Bilaspur issued an advisory appealing to residents to ensure a complete blackout in their respective areas to minimize risks in the event of a potential aerial attack.

On 8 May, India thwarted Pakistan's fresh attempts to strike military sites, after foiling its attempts to target military installations in 15 across the country. *—PTI*

CISF JAWAN DIES OF HEART ATTACK WHILE ON DUTY

THANE, 9 MAY

A 39-year-old Central Industrial Security Force jawan from Maharashtra's Thane district died of a heart attack while on duty in Vadodara in neighbouring Gujarat, an official said on Friday.

The CISF soldier, Naresh Nikam, belonged to the Ulhasnagar area in the district, a police source said.

Despite efforts, he could not be revived and was declared dead at the scene on Thursday, the source added.

The jawan's body was brought back to his hometown early on Friday and cremated with full honours, sources said.

"All necessary formalities as per government and CISF procedures were observed by the district administration," a local official said. *—PTI*

GAZA FOOD CRISIS

Palestinians struggle to obtain food at a community kitchen in Khan Younis, in the southern Gaza Strip on Friday. People are facing shortage of food as aids were cut on 2 March
PHOTO: PTI

India-Pak tensions raise fears of fullblown conflict

The Indian government said the targets were "terrorist camps" that served as recruitment centres, launch-pads and indoctrination centres
PHOTO: PTI

India's air strikes and Pakistan's vows to counter-attack, coupled with the ever-present risk of miscalculation, have raised fears that the situation could snowball into a full-fledged military conflict.

Tensions between South Asian arch-rivals India and Pakistan have escalated sharply this week as New Delhi launched aerial strikes on targets inside Pakistan and Pakistan-administered Kashmir.

India's action was in response to a deadly attack last month on tourists in the scenic town of Pahalgam in India-administered Kashmir, in which 26 people — mainly Hindu men — were killed.

The attack was claimed by a group calling itself the Kashmir Resistance, which India says is also known as The Resistance Front and is linked to Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), a UN-designated terrorist organization.

New Delhi blamed Islamabad for backing the attack, an allegation Pakistan denies.

An Indian response was widely expected as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government was under intense public, political and media pressure domestically to retaliate.

Intense pressure to retaliate

Despite the massive pressure, the government took enough time to carefully plan and execute its response.

The pre-dawn strikes on Wednesday targeted nine sites, including locations in Pakistan-administered Kashmir as well as deep inside Pakistan. The Indian government said the targets were "terrorist camps" that served as recruitment centres, launchpads and indoctrination centres. It also said the sites housed weapons and training facilities.

"Two of these camps are the headquarters of the two most significant groups, Muridke of the LeT and Bahawalpur of the Jaish-e-Mohammed," Ajai Sahni, executive director of the Institute for Conflict Management in New Delhi, said to DW. "The others are documented training camps that have been in existence for a long time. Their names keep cropping up again and again when we see the narratives or interrogation reports of terrorists who have come across the border," the counter terrorsim expert added. "Within the intelligence community internationally these would all be recognized locations."

Sahni, however, believes that the strikes might not have a "significant deterrent effect."

"More importantly, I think this may provoke a certain kind of adaptation on the part of these groups... next time, there will be a sense of fear that this could happen again and it could happen without warning. So, there will be an adaptation on the part of these terrorists, that they will locate more carefully, hide their activities, make provisions for shelters, etc.," he said.

Military experts in India say the scale and significance of the operation was unprecedented.

"The scale — sending out strikes on nine different targets or primarily, hopefully, terrorist hubs — is certainly unprecedented in a peacetime scenario," Admiral Arun Prakash, a former chief of the Indian navy, told DW.

Lt Gen D S Hooda, a former senior commander of the Indian army said, "The fact that you are striking what is considered the heart of Pakistan — the Punjab province — I think it's a very strong response from India's side."

India has divulged no official information on the casualties inflicted or the names of the aircraft and weapons used in the operation.

Following the strikes, New Delhi released a statement saying its actions were "focused, measured and non-escalatory in nature," stressing that it only hit "terrorist infrastructure" across the border but no civilian, economic or military targets.

By stressing that it's "non-escalatory," India is signaling Pakistan that it does not want the situation to spiral, according to Hooda.

"We have tried to avoid collateral damage. So, the messaging is that possibly we do not want to escalate this further," he said.

Prakash, the former navy chief, echoed this view, pointing out that instead of using ballistic missiles, India only "deployed aircraft-launched guided weapons."

"India has done everything to convey the message that this is a limited and very calibrated and targeted strike," he told DW.

He added that the range and accuracy of the weapons was such that the targets could be attacked from a considerable distance without crossing the border with Pakistan.

– DW News

SALAR ساہر

Eastern, Northern India suffer water shortages

Even as India's overall water storage in major reservoirs has improved significantly over last year, several states are struggling with critically low levels, according to the bulletin issued on Friday.

The country's 161 major reservoirs currently hold 57.974 billion cubic meters (BCM) of live storage, accounting for 31.78 per cent of their total capacity, according to the weekly bulletin issued by the Central Water Commission (CWC).

This marks an increase from the 49.290 BCM recorded during the same period last year and exceeds the ten-year average of 50.038 BCM.

Nationally, the current storage is 117.6 per cent of last year's levels and 115.9 per cent of the normal, a sign of overall improvement. However, this aggregated progress masks stark regional imbalances.

The eastern region, covering states like Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand and West Bengal, is facing a sharp water shortage. The region's reservoirs are filled to just 27.87 per cent of their capacity, well below last year's 35.97 per cent and the normal 34.64 per cent.

Critically low storage was reported in Odisha's Rengali and Upper Indravati reservoirs, Bihar's Badua and Chandan dams, and Mizoram's Tuirial reservoir, which is functioning at just 23.4 per cent of its normal storage.

The situation is grimmer in the northern region, where states such as Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Rajasthan collectively recorded only 24.09 per cent of reservoir capacity compared to 29.5 per cent last year.

Storage in the Pong Dam is down to 40.22 per cent of normal and Gobind Sagar is operating at only 20.44 per cent of its full capacity.

The live storage in the Indus basin stands at just 2.831 BCM — only 19.1 per cent of its capacity of 14.819 BCM — representing a massive 40 per cent shortfall from the average.

This shortfall is particularly alarming given that the Indus system supports large parts of Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh through irrigation, drinking water and hydropower generation.

The western region, comprising Maharashtra, Gujarat and Goa, fared relatively better. With 34.7 per cent storage, it exceeded both last year's figure (28.15 per cent) and the normal (27 per cent). Gujarat showed a particularly positive trend, with some reservoirs reporting more than 50 per cent of normal storage.

The reservoirs reached 37.8 per cent of their full capacity in central India, which includes Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand.

This is up from 34.5 per cent last year and well above the ten-year average of 30 per cent. Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh saw sharp gains, with key reservoirs like Gandhi Sagar, Indira Sagar and Bansagar performing significantly better than in previous years.

The southern region, with the highest number of monitored reservoirs (45), recorded 28.79 per cent storage — an improvement over last year's 15.19 per cent and above the normal of 20.58 per cent.

Tamil Nadu stood out with an exceptional rise in storage levels, up by over 91 per cent compared to the ten-year average. Andhra Pradesh's Nagarjuna Sagar reservoir, however, remains in distress, holding only 31.3 per cent of its normal storage.

Telangana's Priyadarshini Jurala and Uttar Pradesh's Rangawan reservoirs have reported zero storage.

Despite the improved national average, 41 reservoirs across the country have storage less than 80 per cent of their normal levels and 17 of these are operating at 50 per cent or less.

These include major reservoirs like Pong Dam, Machchhu II (Gujarat), Bhima Ujjaini (Maharashtra) and Sholayar (Tamil Nadu).

Alarmingly, five reservoirs, including Priyadarshini Jurala in Telangana and Rangawan in Uttar Pradesh, have reported no water at all.

While rainfall and snowmelt have helped improve water levels in many parts of India, especially in central and western regions, the eastern and northern belts remain vulnerable ahead of the peak summer months.

The Central Water Commission has flagged the need for close monitoring and region-specific water management strategies to mitigate risks to agriculture, drinking water supply and hydropower output.

The CWC noted that of the 20 hydroelectric reservoirs it monitors, storage was normal or better in only 12.

—PTI

This shortfall is particularly alarming given that the Indus system supports large parts of Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh through irrigation
PHOTO: PTI

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Europe celebrating V-E Day is now tinged with dread

- Hitler's Nazi Germany had finally surrendered after a half-decade of invading other European powers and propagating racial hatred that led to genocide

Even if the end of World War II in Europe spawned one of the most joyous days the continent ever lived, Thursday's 80th anniversary of V-E Day is haunted as much by the spectre of current-day conflict as it celebrates the defeat of ultimate evil.

Hitler's Nazi Germany had finally surrendered after a half-decade of invading other European powers and propagating racial hatred that led to genocide, the Holocaust and the murdering of millions.

That surrender and the explosion of hope for a better life was celebrated with parades in London and Paris and towns across Europe while even the leaders of erstwhile mortal enemies are bonding again.

Germany itself again expressed gratitude for the change that 8 May, 1945, brought - to the world and to itself.

"It was Germans who unleashed this criminal war and dragged all of Europe with them into the abyss," German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier told parliament. "Today, 80 years later, our profound thanks still go to the Allied soldiers and the European resistance movements who mustered all their strength and endured great losses in order to defeat the Nazi regime."

Russian servicemen take part in the Victory Day military parade in Moscow, Russia, Friday
PHOTO: PTI

Steinmeier's comments underscore that former European enemies may thrive - to the extent that the 27-nation European Union even won the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize - but that the outlook has turned gloomy over the past year.

The body count continues to rise in Ukraine, where Russia's 2022 full-scale invasion started the worst war on the continent since 1945.

"We are not celebrating this 8 May today in a spirit of calm self-assurance. Because we can see that freedom is not the grand finale of history," teinmeier warned.

US was instrumental in turning the tide of the war in Europe, invading along with Allies the D-Day beaches in France's Normandy on 6 June, 1944, in what proved to be the tipping point of the war in Europe that inexorably led to the invasion of Germany and the defeat of the Nazis.

On Wednesday, Trump proclaimed Thursday as a day for US to celebrate victory in World War II, insisting the country should better recognize its essential role in the war.

The war did drag on beyond Europe, especially in the Pacific against Japan, but even Taiwan joined in marking the day for the first time - and highlighting current-day threats.

Commemorations have been going all week through Europe, and Britain has taken a lead. Here too, the current-day plight of Ukraine in its fight against Russia took center stage.

In London, a service was held at Westminster Abbey, where the royal family took time to chat with the veterans, bending over to hear the older veterans in wheelchairs, many of whom the royals have now met at previous services.

In France, where the date is a public holiday, President Emmanuel Macron presided over a wreath-laying ceremony in Paris in front of a statue of Gen. Charles de Gaulle, who refused the Franco-German armistice in 1940. De Gaulle fled to London and founded the French Free Forces, organizing networks of resistance fighters and overseeing anti-Nazi sabotage missions in France.

In Berlin, Chancellor Friedrich Merz again highlighted how Germany has remodeled itself into a beacon of European democracy by laying a wreath at the central memorial for the victims of war and tyranny.

Symbolically, President Vladimir Putin will be totally out of lockstep with the rest of Europe as Russia celebrates its Victory Day one day later with a huge military parade on Moscow's Red Square to mark the massive Soviet contribution to defeat Nazi Germany.

—PTI

PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE

Six military personnel killed in SL helicopter crash

COLOMBO, 9 MAY

A military helicopter has tragically crashed into a reservoir in Sri Lanka, resulting in the deaths of six armed forces personnel. The Sri Lanka Air Force Bell 212 was en route to a demonstration for the Army's Special Forces brigade passing out parade when the accident occurred in the north-central region of Maduru Oya, as confirmed by the Ministry of Defence. Among the deceased are two Air Force personnel and four Special Forces soldiers. In response to this tragedy, the Sri Lanka Air Force has instituted a nine-member panel to investigate the circumstances surrounding the crash. The nation mourns the loss of these brave servicemen as details of the investigation unfold. *—PTI*

6 sea robberies reported in S'pore Strait in May

SINGAPORE, 9 MAY

The Singapore Strait has experienced a concerning rise in sea robberies, with six incidents reported between 2-7 May this month. The incidents occurred along the eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme in the Phillip Channel, impacting bulk carriers and tankers. Notably, 2 incidents resulted in the theft of engine spares, while nothing was taken in the other 4 occurrences. Fortunately, none of the crew members were injured. This brings the total to 50 reported incidents in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore since January 2025. The Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) has urged littoral states to enhance patrols and vigilance, especially during nighttime, to protect maritime safety. *—PTI*

Jennifer Aniston's stalker appears 'shirtless' in court

LOS ANGELES, 9 MAY

A Los Angeles judge has mandated a mental evaluation for Jimmy Wayne Carwyle, the man accused of crashing his car into the front gate of actress Jennifer Aniston's affluent Bel Air neighbourhood home after he appeared shirtless and wrapped in a blanket during the hearing. He pleaded 'not guilty' to accusations that over the past two years, he reportedly harassed Aniston with repeated calls and messages prior to the incident. Judge Keith L Schwartz expressed concerns regarding Carwyle's competency to face felony stalking and vandalism charges. The judge issued an order forbidding any contact with Aniston under any circumstances. *—PTI*

Aus govt to prioritise student debt reduction

MELBOURNE, 9 MAY

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has declared that reducing student debt will be the foremost legislative priority for his newly re-elected government. Speaking to Labour Party lawmakers in Parliament, he emphasised the urgency of addressing the struggles faced by young Australians, especially concerning rising real estate prices exacerbated by student loans. The proposed legislation aims to reduce student debt by 20 per cent and will be introduced when Parliament reconvenes in late July. Albanese highlighted the importance of intergenerational equity, the need for equitable representation of younger voters as the Baby Boomer generation is now outnumbered in the electorate. Labour is projected to maintain a strong presence in Parliament, winning 88 of 150 seats. *—PTI*

Pakistan seeks $7 billion bailout package from IMF

Economy at the brink as debts stand at USD 130 billion

ISLAMABAD, 9 MAY

Pakistan on Friday met with the officials of International Monetary Fund seeking a 7 billion dollar bailout package to rescue its teetering economy in the brink of bankruptcy amidst the ongoing military conflict with India.

Pakistan's loans stands at USD 6.2 billion as of March 2025 with the IMF alone since it became a member in 1950 and World bank has given USD 48 billion dollars since. Its economy is surviving on handouts from countries like China, Saudi Arabia and Qatar and external foreign debt alone stood at USD 130 billion dollars.

India has made it clear it will ask IMF to exercise 'caution' while providing loans to the neighbouring country. Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri noted that many of the "24 bailout packages sanctioned by the IMF for Pakistan had not reached a successful conclusion."

The IMF's Executive Board is expected to review Pakistan's financing facilities to decide on the funding, however it is expected to give its nod for the disbursement during its meeting today, part of a long-running USD 7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF) program.

Islamabad has also increasingly relied on climate funding as a financial escape route and has now managed to bag an additional USD 1.3 billion under the IMF's Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF) -- a mechanism meant for genuine climate action, not budget patchwork.

In its statement, the IMF acknowledged that Pakistan will now receive a total of USD 2 billion under the current bailout, while simultaneously locking itself into yet another 28-month dependency cycle under the RSF, ARY News reported.

Pakistan's leadership continues to tout these loans as achievements. In reality, they are signs of a collapsing economy and a bankrupt vision. With no structural reforms in sight and debt mounting, the question isn't when Pakistan will recover -- it's whether it even wants to.

Meanwhile, jailed former Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan's party on Friday filed a petition in the High Court here seeking his release from jail, claiming a threat to his life due to the impact of the prolonged detention on his health and in view of the current situation with India.

Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf party, in a WhatsApp message, said that the party's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur approached the Islamabad High Court for the release of the party founder now housed in Adiala jail since 2023. *—Agencies.*

Ukraine says it uncovered Hungarian espionage

KYIV, 9 MAY

Ukraine's main security agency said Friday it had arrested two people on suspicion of spying for Hungary by gathering intelligence on Ukraine's military in the west of the country.

In a statement, the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) said that two suspects, both former members of the Ukrainian military, had been detained and face charges of treason, which is punishable by life imprisonment. It was the first time in Ukraine's history that a Hungarian espionage operation had been discovered, the statement said.

Ukraine's SBU said both suspected spies were overseen by a career officer of Hungary's military intelligence, whose identity had also been established. That officer supplied the network with cash and a special device for covert communication to support the operation, and had attempted to recruit other individuals into the network, the SBU said.

The Hungarian Defence Ministry and Military National Security Service did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

The activities of the suspected spies were focused on the Zakarpattia region of western Ukraine, bordering Hungary and home to a sizeable Hungarian ethnic minority, a region which both Budapest and Kyiv have claimed.

Hungary, led by Prime Minister Viktor Orbán although a NATO member, is seen close to Russia and has taken an adversarial approach to Ukraine since Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022,opposes Ukraine joining NATO. *—PTI*

Ukrainian SBU said it detained 2 suspects who worked for the Hungarian secret services
PHOTO: X @SZABADONMAGYAR

Trump orders to fire 1,000 trans troopers fom military

The US military will "immediately" start the process of removing some 1,000 transgender troops and will force out those who do not leave voluntarily by early June, the Pentagon said ***PHOTO: CHATGPT***

WASHINGTON, 9 MAY

The Pentagon is set to commence the removal of as many as 1,000 openly transgender service members from the military, following a new directive announced on Thursday. This move comes in the wake of a Supreme Court decision allowing the Trump administration to enforce a ban on transgender individuals serving in the armed forces.

Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth conveyed his stance in a post on X, stating, "No More Trans @ DoD," while earlier declaring a departure from "wokeness and weakness." The Department of Defence reported that a review of medical records will identify service members diagnosed with gender dysphoria, which affects those whose biological sex does not align with their gender identity. As of 9 December, 2024, there were approximately 4,240 service members diagnosed with this condition.

The latest memo grants active duty personnel until 6 June to self-identify as transgender, while National Guard and Reserve members have until 7 July. The Pentagon has justified the ban by asserting that medical and mental health requirements associated with gender dysphoria are incompatible with military standards. If a waiver is issued, the applicant would still face a situation where only their biological sex was recognised such as being called 'Sir' or 'Ma'am'.*—PTI*

Trump fires 1st Afro-American Cong-librarian

WASHINGTON, 9 MAY

President Donald Trump dismissed Carla Hayden, the first African American to becomes Librarian of Congress, via email on Thursday. Hayden faced criticism from conservative groups but drew outrage from congressional Democrats, who lauded Hayden as a "trailblazer" and accused Trump of targeting opponents of his agenda. *-PTI*

Trump picks Fox News host for US Attorney DC

WASHINGTON, 9 MAY

President Donald Trump has announced the appointment of Fox News host Jeanine Pirro as the interim US Attorney for Washington DC. A former New York judge and district attorney, joins the nation's largest US Attorney's office amidst scrutiny over his qualifications. Trump has praised her as New York's finest district attorney. *-PTI*

US warned over spying on Greenland

OSLO, 9 MAY

Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen asserted, "you cannot spy against an ally," following reports that the United States has intensified intelligence activities regarding Greenland, a semi-autonomous Danish territory. Denmark summoned the top US diplomat in Copenhagen calling for an explanation after a Wall Street Journal article revealed that officials under US intelligence director Tulsi Gabbard had been directed to assess Greenland's independence movement and sentiments about American resource extraction. In a meeting with Danish diplomat Jeppe Tranholm-Mikkelsen, the US Embassy refrained from further comment. Frederiksen described the Journal's claims as mere "rumours." Gabbard responded by condemning leaks of classified information, asserting the need for accountability. Greenland's Prime Minister previously stated the territory will not be treated as a commodity for sale. *—PTI*

STRATEGIC PARTNERS

Russian President Vladimir Putin, right, and Chinese President Xi Jinping attend a signing ceremony after their meeting at the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia on Thursday ***PHOTO: PTI***

Russia, China team against US

- Xi Jinping, Chinese Premier and Vladimir Putin, Russian President took a veiled dig at NATO condemning 'highly destabilising expansion of military alliances

MOSCOW, 8 MAY

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping on Thursday reaffirmed their resolve to jointly counter US plans for a "Golden Dome" missile shield and NATO's eastward expansion, which they said are aimed at containing Moscow and Beijing.

Xi who arrived here on Wednesday for a four-day official visit to take part in Victory day parade celebrations signed a joint statement after 7 hours of talks.

"The recently announced large-scale program Golden Dome for America, which envisages the creation of an unconstrained, global and multi-tier missile defence system providing protection against any missile threats, including all types of missiles of adversaries equal or similar in strength, also has a deeply destabilising character," they said in the joint statement.

In a veiled dig at NATO, the statement also condemned the "highly destabilising expansion" of military alliances by some nuclear-weapon states near others' borders to "establish footholds," "project power," and threaten their core security interests.

The two sides strongly condemn such "provocative activities" that they said "undermine regional stability and global security".

He added that the two leaders agreed to meet again in Beijing in September to mark the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War and honour Soviet and Chinese troops who fought together against Japan.

Speaking at the parade, Putin hailed Russian troops fighting in Ukraine, saying that "we are proud of their courage and determination, their spiritual force that always has brought us victory."

Despite the Russian leader declaring a unilateral 72-hour ceasefire, the two sides have been attacking each other with Ukrainian drone attacks targeting Moscow and severe disruptions at the capital's airports. Ukrainian authorities reported scores of Russian strikes on Friday that killed at least two people in the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions and damaged buildings. *—PTI*

'Columbia varsity incited violence', says freed Palestinian student

MONTPELIER, 9 MAY

Mohsen Mahdawi speaks to supporters and media after his release from jail on Thursday ***PHOTO: FACEBOOK***

A Palestinian student Mohsen Mahdawi, 34 who was arrested as he was about to finalise his US citizenship accused Columbia University on Thursday of eroding democracy with its handling of campus protests against the Israel-Hamas war.

Mahdawi said instead of being a "beacon of hope," the university is inciting violence against students.

"Columbia University is participating in the destruction of the democratic system. They are supporting the initiatives and the agenda of the Trump administration, and they are punishing and torturing their students," " Mahdawi said in the interview.

Mahdawi, a legal permanent resident, was born in a refugee camp in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and moved to the US in 2014. At Columbia, he organized campus protests and co-founded the Palestinian Student Union with Mahmoud Khalil, another Palestinian permanent US resident and graduate student who was arrested in March.

The Trump administration has said Mahdawi should be deported because his activism threatens its foreign policy goals, but the judge who released him ruled that he has raised a "substantial claim" that the government arrested him to stifle speech. *—PTI*

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Pope Leo XIV's name signals commitment to social justice

SCHIAVON, 8 MAY

Newly elected Pope Leo XIV concelebrates Mass with the College of Cardinals inside the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican on Friday ***PHOTO: PTI***

The practice of Popes adopting a new name became ingrained during the 11th century. For many centuries, new Popes tended to choose the name of the pope who had elevated them to cardinal.

It was from the mid-20th century that new popes began to choose names signalling the aim of their papacy. Pope Leo XIV's choice of name signals a commitment to social justice which is very much in line with the late Pope Francis' global ministry.

The new Pope's predecessor, Pope Leo XIII, who was head of the Catholic Church from 1878 to 1903, laid the foundation for modern Catholic social thought, most famously with his 1891 encyclical Rerum Novarum, which addressed workers' rights and capitalism at the dawn of the industrial age.

He criticised both laissez-faire capitalism and state-centric socialism, giving shape to a distinctly Catholic vein of economic teaching.

The name "is a deep sign of commitment to social issues," said Natalia Imperatori-Lee, the chair of religious studies at Manhattan University "I think this (new) pope is saying something about social justice, by choosing this name, that it is going to be a priority. He is continuing a lot of Francis' ministry."

Another predecessor, Pope Leo I, was known for repelling the barbarian invasion of Atilla the Hun in 452 AD.

Pope Leo XIV, history's first North American pope, said Friday that his 'election was both a cross and a blessing' as he celebrated his first Mass in Sistine Chapel for the first time. *—PTI*

Markets tumble as India-Pak clash soars

Sensex declines by 880.34 pts, Nifty drops by 265.80 pts as fears of flare up grip investors

MUMBAI, 9 MAY

Stock market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty tumbled over 1 per cent each on Friday as tensions soared between India and Pakistan, fuelling fears of a wider conflict.

Extending its previous day's decline, the 30-share BSE benchmark gauge tanked 880.34 points or 1.10 per cent to settle at 79,454.47, in a largely range-bound trading.

The NSE Nifty dropped 265.80 points or 1.10 per cent to 24,008.

India on Thursday night swiftly thwarted Pakistan's fresh attempts to strike military sites with drones and missiles, including in Jammu and Pathankot, after foiling similar bids at 15 places in northern and western regions of the country as tensions soared between the two countries.

The Indian armed forces on Wednesday had carried out precise missile strikes on nine terror targets in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Pakistan under 'Operation Sindoor'.

"Interestingly, Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) continued to invest in the Indian market until yesterday, while retail investors remain slightly cautious at the moment," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

From the Sensex firms, ICICI Bank, Power Grid, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finance, HDFC Bank, Reliance Industries, Bajaj Finserv, Adani Ports, Mahindra & Mahindra and NTPC were among the laggards.

Titan Company climbed over 4 per cent higher after the Tata group firm reported a 13 per cent increase in its consolidated profit after tax at Rs 871 crore in the March quarter, driven by robust sales.

Larsen & Toubro jumped nearly 4 per cent after the firm reported a 25 per cent increase in consolidated profit after tax (PAT) to Rs 5,497 crore for the quarter ended March 31, 2025, supported by higher revenues and an exceptional gain.

Tata Motors, State Bank of India and Asian Paints were among the gainers.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 2,007.96 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data. —*PTI*

A graphic display of Operation Sindoor on a screen outside the Bombay Stock Exchange building in Mumbai on Friday **PHOTO: PTI**

We have no role to play beyond a facilitator. There's a lot of speculation in the media about how the World Bank will step in and fix the problem but it's all bunk. The World Bank's role is merely as a facilitator

–Ajay Banga, World Bank President

PHOTO:FREEPIK

Gold rallies ₹480, inches close to ₹1 lakh mark

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

Gold prices rallied Rs 480 to Rs 99,730 per 10g in the national capital on Friday as rising tensions between India and Pakistan triggered demand for safe haven assets, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Gold of 99.9 per cent purity had ended at Rs 99,250 per 10g in the previous market close. Gold of 99.5 per cent purity climbed Rs 480 to Rs 99,280 per 10g on Friday. It had closed at Rs 98,800 per 10g on Thursday. As per the Sarafa Association, silver prices also increased Rs 200 to Rs 98,400 per kg. In the international markets, spot gold rose USD 22.37 to USD 3,328.09 per ounce. Spot silver in the overseas markets went up 0.23 per cent to USD 32.54 per ounce. —*PTI*

Rupee rises 17P, closes at 85.41 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 9 MAY

The rupee pared its initial losses and settled for the day higher by 17 paise at 85.41 (provisional) against the US dollar on Friday, as likely intervention by the Reserve Bank of India helped contain excess depreciation of the rupee. Forex traders said the rupee opened on a weak note on the escalation of hostility between India and Pakistan, however, RBI intervened to prevent major weakness. At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened at 85.88 and moved between the intra-day high of 85.32 and the low of 85.88 against the greenback. The unit ended the session at 85.41 (provisional), registering a gain of 17 paise over its previous closing level. —*PTI*

Union Bank's Q4 profit goes up by 50%

MUMBAI, 9 MAY

Union Bank of India reported a 50 per cent year-on-year rise in net profit to Rs 4,985 crore for the March quarter, up from Rs 3,311 crore last year. Total income rose to Rs 33,254 crore. While core net interest income remained flat at Rs 9,514 crore, higher non-interest income and reduced provisions supported profitability. CEO A Manimekhalai acknowledged that RBI's rate cuts will pressure net interest margins, with 29 per cent of the loan book linked to the repo rate. She declined to comment on the alleged Rs 7.2 crore bulk purchase of ex-CEA Krishnamurthy Subramanian's book, amid reports of a suspended general manager. Operational costs rose 20 per cent, pushing the cost-to-income ratio to 48.91 per cent. The bank's shares surged 6.28 per cent despite broader market weakness. —*PTI*

Mercedes plans up to 3% price hike by Sept

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

Mercedes-Benz India will raise ex-showroom prices of its vehicles in two phases this year due to significant forex fluctuations, particularly a 10 per cent depreciation in the Euro to INR rate. The hikes, effective from 1 June and 1 September, will range from Rs 90,000 for a C-Class to Rs 12.2 lakh for the Maybach S 680, amounting to a total increase of around 3 per cent. MD & CEO Santosh Iyer said the company has absorbed most of the forex impact but now must pass on part of the cost. Rising import and operational expenses, especially for CBUs, necessitate the revision. The staggered approach, along with flexible finance options, is designed to ease the financial impact on customers and help them better plan their purchases. —*PTI*

Authorities place enhanced security measures at airports

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

Enhanced security measures have been put in place at airports across the country, and some flights have been impacted, while airlines have advised passengers to reach airports well in advance before their scheduled flight departures. Delhi International Airport Ltd , the operator of the country's largest and busiest airport Indira Gandhi International Airport in the national capital, on Friday said operations are normal. Amid escalating tensions between India and Pakistan, the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) has made secondary ladder point checking compulsory for all flights, banned visitors at terminal buildings of airports and enhanced overall security. Airline officials said flight operations are normal. With security being stepped up at the airports, airlines have asked passengers to reach the airport three hours before departure of domestic flights in the wake of stepping up of checks and other security measures at the airports. — *PTI*

Delhi airport cancels 138 flights

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

As many as 138 flights to and from the Delhi airport were cancelled by various airlines on Friday, according to a source. Around 27 airports in various parts of the country are closed in the wake of Operation Sindoor. As a result of the closure of the airports, many flights have been cancelled.

A total of 66 domestic departures and 63 arrivals, as well as 5 international departures and 4 arrivals, were cancelled between 5 am and 2 pm on Friday, the source said. — *PTI*

Oil companies assure public of ample fuel stocks

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) have reassured the public that there is no shortage of fuel or LPG across the country, following panic buying in border states like Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab. This surge in demand was triggered by escalating tensions between India and Pakistan, after Pakistani armed forces launched drone and missile attacks along the western border. Both companies confirmed their supply chains are operating smoothly, urging citizens to remain calm and avoid unnecessary queues to ensure uninterrupted fuel access. — *PTI*

Banks say ATMs are well stocked

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

State Bank of India, Punjab National Bank and several other lenders on Friday said their ATMs are fully functional, well-stocked, and that digital services are operating smoothly.

The announcements came against the backdrop of reports on social media that ATMs are likely to be shut in the coming days amid escalating tensions between India and Pakistan.

They also said that all their digital services are operating smoothly.

"All our ATMs, CDMs/ ADWMs and digital services are fully operational and available for public use," India's largest bank, State Bank of India, said in a post on social media post 'X'.

India's largest lender also advised its customers not to rely on unverified information.

Similar messages have been posted by Bank of Baroda, Punjab and Sindh Bank, Canara Bank and Bank of India.

Meanwhile, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will hold a review meeting on cybersecurity preparedness of banks and financial institutions in the evening, the ministry said. —*PTI*

Telecom firms to ensure full coverage

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

Amid rising tensions with Pakistan, Indian telecom operators have swiftly implemented measures to ensure uninterrupted connectivity. These include intra-circle roaming arrangements, the establishment of national-level control centres, and stockpiling diesel for telecom towers. The telecom department held a meeting with operators on 7 May, instructing them to activate round-the-clock network monitoring and ensure smooth roaming services. Operators were also asked to set up 'war rooms' for vigilance and coordinate closely with authorities. In addition, they must report any network or site disruptions in real-time. The same night, Indian forces successfully intercepted Pakistani missile and drone attempts targeting military stations in Jammu, Pathankot, and Udhampur, reaffirming India's preparedness to defend its sovereignty. —*PTI*

Equity MF inflow dips below ₹24K cr in April

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

Inflow in equity mutual funds dipped 3.24 per cent to Rs 24,269 crore in April amid continued market volatility against the backdrop of escalating Indo–Pak tensions.

This was the fourth consecutive month of decline in inflow in equity funds. Also, the latest fund infusion by investors marks the 50th consecutive month of net inflows into the segment. Besides, debt funds registered an inflow of Rs 2.19 lakh crore in the month under review after seeing a withdrawal of Rs 2.02 lakh crore in March. Overall, the mutual fund industry experienced an infusion of Rs 2.77 lakh crore in April as compared to an outflow of Rs 1.64 lakh crore in the preceding month.

The inflow has lifted the industry's asset under management to a record Rs 70 lakh crore as of April from Rs 65.74 lakh crore at March-end, showed Amfi data on Friday.

According to the data, equity-oriented mutual funds saw an inflow of Rs 24,269 crore in April, lower than Rs 25,082 crore in March. In February, such funds witnessed an inflow of Rs 29,303 crore, Rs 39,688 crore in January and Rs 41,156 crore in December.

"While this marks a slight decline of 3.24 per cent compared to Rs 25,082 crore in March, the quantum of flows remains significant, especially in the backdrop of a challenging global landscape and escalating geopolitical tensions between India and Pakistan following the Pahalgam terrorist attack on April 22," said Morningstar Investment Research India's Himanshu Srivastava. —*PTI*

Sat firms like Starlink to pay 4% spectrum charges

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

Telecom regulator TRAI on Friday recommended that satellite communication companies like Starlink pay 4 per cent of their adjusted gross revenue (AGR) as spectrum charges to the government -- a rate steeper than what these firms had been lobbying for.

Operators offering satellite-based broadband internet services in urban areas would have to shell out an additional Rs 500 per subscribers annually, TRAI said in its recommendations to the Department of Telecommunications. No additional levy would be applicable for services in rural areas.

The levy recommended by TRAI is steeper than what satcom companies have been lobbying for. Elon Musk's Starlink and Amazon Inc's subsidiary Kuiper Systems had during consultations with the TRAI urged it to keep spectrum charge below 1 per cent of AGR with no other charge.

PHOTO:X

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) recommended that satellite broadband spectrum be allotted for five years, which can be extended by another two years.

TRAI said the 4 per cent of AGR spectrum charge would be subject to a minimum annual spectrum charge of Rs 3,500 per MHz. —*PTI*

WORLD MARKETS PIN HOPES ON CHINA-US TRADE TALKS

HONG KONG, 9 MAY

Shares advanced Friday in Europe after a mixed day in Asia as investors pinned their hopes on weekend trade talks between China and the US.

Germany's DAX gained 0.6 per cent to 23,483.39, while the CAC 40 in Paris was up 0.5 per cent at 7,735.29. Britain's FTSE 100 added 0.4 per cent to 8,563.65.

The future for the S&P 500 was nearly unchanged while that for the Dow Jones Industrial Average slipped 0.1 per cent.

PHOTO:FREEPIK

China reported that its exports rose at a faster-than-expected 8.1 per cent annual pace in April, down from 12.4% the month before. Exports to the United States dropped more than 20 per cent, however, as President Donald Trump's steep tariff increases took effect.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng gained 0.3 per cent to 22,844.33, while the Shanghai Composite Index lost 0.3 per cent to 3,342.00.

Tokyo's Nikkei 225 jumped 1.6% to 37,503.33, while the Kospi in Seoul dipped 0.1% to 2,577.27. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 added 0.5% to 8,231.20.

Taiwan's Taiex surged 1.8% and India's Sensex fell 1%.

The S&P 500 climbed 0.6% for its 11th gain in the last 13 days. The Dow added 0.6% and the Nasdaq composite rose 1.1%. —*PTI*

SHARP REBOUND

IT sector grew by 16% in April; added 1,10,000 new jobs: Report

MUMBAI, 9 MAY

Hiring in the IT sector grew 16 per cent year-on-year in April, driven by factors such as AI adoption, cloud modernisation and the continued expansion of Global Capability Centers (GCCs), a report said on Friday.

India's IT hiring grew last month, marking a sharp rebound from fluctuations over previous years, the report "the foundit Insights Tracker (fit)" by jobs platform Foundit said. The GCCs played a significant role in this hiring growth, contributing over 1,10,000 new tech jobs in FY25, and ramping up demand for roles like data engineering, DevOps, and enterprise architecture, the report said.

The fit Insights Tracker is a comprehensive monthly analysis of online job posting activity conducted by foundit.in. The report further said that skill-based hiring continued to dominate, with 62 per cent of IT employers prioritising practical expertise over formal qualifications.

Top in-demand domains included AI/ML, cloud computing, cybersecurity, and data analytics, which together account for 95 per cent of job postings in the IT sector, it stated.

Cities like Coimbatore (40 per cent) Ahmedabad (17 per cent), and Baroda (15 per cent) recorded remarkable annual hiring growth driven by hybrid work models and cost advantages, said the report.

Metro hubs like Bengaluru (9 per cent), Mumbai (9 per cent), and Delhi NCR (7 per cent) continued to lead hiring for leadership and specialist roles, it added. —*PTI*

Revised credit scheme to help startups, R&D: Govt

- The revised Credit Guarantee Scheme for Startups increases the ceiling on guarantee cover per borrower from Rs 10 crore to Rs 20 crore to ensure collateral-free debt funding to startups

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

The revised Credit Guarantee Scheme for Startups (CGSS) will further reduce the perceived risks of lending to them, enabling greater financial support to undertake research and development, and creating cutting-edge technologies, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) said on Friday.

The scheme increases the ceiling on guarantee cover per borrower from Rs 10 crore to Rs 20 crore. The broad objective of CGSS is to provide guarantee up to a specified limit against credit instruments extended by member institutions to finance eligible startups. This scheme would help provide the much needed collateral-free debt funding to startups.

"The expanded scheme will further reduce the perceived risks associated with lending to startups in established financial institutions, enabling greater financial flow and runway for startups to undertake R&D, experimentation, and create cutting-edge innovation and technologies," the DPIIT said. It also said the extent of guarantee cover has been increased to 85 per cent for loans up to Rs 10 crore and 75 per cent for loans above that. —*PTI*

Basmati prices up on higher demand: AIREA

NEW DELHI, 9 MAY

All India Rice Exporters Association (AIREA) President Satish Goel on Friday ruled out any impact on Basmati trade, stressing that the recent increase in prices of the commodity is owing to higher demand and not due to the ongoing India-Pakistan tensions.

The export price of Basmati rice varieties – 1509 and 1718 – have inched up slightly since March due to a rise in demand and not due to the supply disruptions caused because of the ongoing military escalations between the two nations, he said. "Not due to ongoing India-Pakistan tensions, the Basmati prices have gone up recently. Prices rose slightly because of higher demand from Saudi Arabia, Iran and Iraq," Goel said.

The trade has not been affected so far and the orders are being fulfilled smoothly, he said.

AIREA former president Vijay Sethia said that in September 2024, Basmati rice, particularly the 1509 variety, were ruling high at Rs 62 per kg. Then, the prices dropped due to a bumper crop. Large arrivals of 1509 paddy as well as other Basmati varieties in major producing regions led to downward pressure on prices. —*PTI*

PHOTO: X

SA appoints Shukri Conrad as all-format coach

JOHANNESBURG, 9 MAY

South Africa Test coach Shukri Conrad will take charge of the Proteas white ball teams until the 2027 ICC 50-over World Cup, the CSA announced here on Friday. Conrad, who has been coaching the SA Test side since 2023, succeeds Rob Walter, who resigned in April after the Champions Trophy. The 58-year-old's first white ball assignment will be a T20I series against Zimbabwe and New Zealand in July. CSA Director of National Teams and High Performance, Enoch Nkwe, commented "Shukri's track record with the red-ball team speaks for itself. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

Neeraj Chopra Classic postponed indefinitely

BENGALURU, 9 MAY

The inaugural Neeraj Chopra Classic, scheduled to be held on 24 May in Bengaluru, was postponed indefinitely on Friday amid heightened tension with Pakistan. Double Olympic medallist Chopra had last month announced that the high-profile javelin tournament has been shifted to Bengaluru from the original venue of Panchkula. Chopra announced the postponement by posting a statement from the NC Classic team on Twitter. He said the revised schedule of the tournament will be shared in due course. "In the light of the current situation, the inaugural edition of the NC Classic stands postponed until further notice," the statement read.*—PTI*

Australian ex-cricketer Stuart Macgill spared jail

SYDNEY, 9 MAY

Former Australian Test cricketer Stuart MacGill avoided jail time Friday when a Sydney judge sentenced him for taking part in the supply of cocaine. The 54-year-old was given an "intensive corrections order," a sentence that is served in the community for one year and 10 months, court papers showed. It includes 495 hours of community service and a requirement to abstain from alcohol and drugs, with mandatory testing.*—PTI*

PHOTO: X

Akshay Bhatia shoots 63 at Truist Championship

FLOURTOWN, 9 MAY

Indian-American golfer Akshay Bhatia struck 10 birdies in a brilliant opening-round card of seven-under 63 to grab a share of the third spot in the Truist Championship here. Bhatia was placed alongside Rickie Fowler, Colin Morikawa, and Sepp Straka on the leaderboard. He is two strokes behind the leader, Keith Mitchell (61), and one behind Denny McCarthy (62). Indo-British player Aaron Rai turned in a five-under 65 to be placed tied 11th. Another Indian-American, Sahith Theegal, managed a modest one-under 69 and is placed tied 55th after the first day.*—PTI*

Unnati, Ayush move into semifinals of Taipei Open

Hooda will next face top seed Tomoka Miyazaki of Japan

TAIPEI, 9 MAY

Young Indian shuttlers Ayush Shetty and Unnati Hooda continued to impress at the Taipei Open Super 300 badminton tournament, beating their respective rivals in tough three-game contests to progress to the semifinals of the men's and women's singles events here on Friday.

Taking the court first, Unnati, the 2022 Odisha Masters and 2023 Abu Dhabi Masters champion, fought hard for 52 minutes to get the better of local shuttler Hung Yi-Ting 21-8, 19-21, 21-19 in the women's singles quarterfinals.

Earlier, the 17-year-old Indian, ranked 53rd in the world as against her opponent's 65th, made short work of another Taipei shuttler Lin Sih Yun 21-12 21-7 in the round of 16. She will next face top seed Tomoka Miyazaki of Japan. The Japanese beat Hsiang Lin of Taipei 17-21, 21-8, 21-17 in another quarterfinal. The 20-year-old Ayush, a 2023 World Junior Championships bronze medallist, who overcame senior pro Kidambi Srikanth in a hard-fought second-round clash, stunned Canada's seventh seed Brian Yang 16-21 21-19 21-14 in a contest that lasted for one hour and 11 minutes to move to the last four stage.

The rising Indian, who had stunned All England Championships runner-up Lee Chia Hao in the opening round, will next take on the winner of the other quarterfinal match between top seed Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei and Indonesia's Moh Zaki Ubaidillah. *—PTI*

Unnati Hooda and Ayush Shetty reached the final four of the Taipei Open 2025 **PHOTO: PTI**

Deepika, Salunkhe in semis

SHANGHAI, 9 JUNE

The Indian compound mixed team entered the bronze medal match while Deepika Kumari and Parth Sushant Salunkhe made it to the women's and men's recurve individual semifinals of the World Cup Stage 2 here on Friday.

Madhura Dhamangaonkar and Abhishek Verma lost 156-158 to Ella Gibson and Ajay Scott of Great Britain in the compound mixed team semifinal.

The Indian archers lost the opening and third series 38-39 and 39-40 while they were tied 40-40 and 39-39 in the second and fourth series. *—PTI*

YASHASVI JAISWAL WANTS TO CONTINUE PLAYING FOR MUMBAI

MUMBAI, 9 MAY

India opener Yashasvi Jaiswal has requested the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) to allow him to remain with the domestic giants, a month after asking for a No Objection Certificate (NOC) to switch to Goa.

In April, Jaiswal surprised everyone by writing to the MCA to seek its approval for a shock move to Goa. On its part, the MCA too had swiftly approved Jaiswal's request. PTI has Jaiswal's email to the MCA in which he said he is available to represent Mumbai in the next domestic season. "I, the undersigned, would request your goodself to consider my request in withdrawing my NOC given to me as I had some family plans in shifting to Goa, which for now has been curtailed !" Jaiswal wrote. "So I sincerely request MCA to allow me to play for Mumbai this season! I have not submitted the NOC to BCCI nor to the Goa Cricket Association!" he added.

Jaiswal, who moved from Uttar Pradesh's Bhadohi to Mumbai as a young player and rose through the ranks to make his debut across formats for India over the last couple of years, was also believed to have shifted to Goa from Mumbai owing to the prospect of becoming their captain.*— PTI*

Djokovic's shocking move: Skips Rome, targets Geneva Open

PARIS, 9 MAY

Tennis superstar Novak Djokovic is shaking up his schedule as he gears up for the upcoming French Open. In a surprising turn of events, Djokovic has confirmed his participation in the Geneva Open later this month, marking his second consecutive appearance at the tournament. This decision comes hot on the heels of his recent withdrawal from the Rome Open, a competition where he has previously clinched victory six times. Djokovic's performance on clay courts this season has been lackluster, with the champion yet to secure a win on the surface. Defeats at the Monte-Carlo Masters and Madrid Open have left fans questioning his form leading up to the French Open, set to commence on May 25th. The Geneva Open now presents itself as Djokovic's final opportunity to gain momentum and confidence before the Grand Slam event.Last year, Djokovic faced a tough loss to Tomas Machac at the Geneva Open. Despite securing victories over Yannick Hanfmann and Tallon Griekspoor, his journey was cut short in the semi-finals. This year, Djokovic's decision to compete in a smaller tournament like Geneva, where Taylor Fritz and Casper Ruud will also be in the spotlight, raises eyebrows but underscores his determination to fine-tune his game.

Geneva Open starting on May 17th, all eyes will be on the Serbian star as he strives to regain his winning form. *—PTI*

'Bomb threat' to stadium

CHENNAI, 8 MAY

A "threat" has been received, which claimed that a bomb would be detonated if cricket events were to be held here, police said on Friday.

An investigation has been ordered, a police official said, adding the threat was made via an e-mail, which warned against cricket events at the M A Chidambaram stadium here.

Following the receipt of the mail, a bomb disposal squad made a thorough inspection and did not find anything suspicious, police officials told PTI adding "it was a hoax."

The e-mail was received on Thursday, and it was brought to the notice of the police on May 9 morning, following which an inspection was held.

Asked if this was suspected to be the handiwork of repeat offenders, the official said a probe would unmask those behind the threat. *—PTI*

Fans outside the Bharat Ratna Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium, after the Indian Premier League (IPL) was on Friday suspended indefinitely **PHOTO: PTI**

UAE SET TO DECLINE PCB REQUEST TO HOST PSL GAMES

DUBAI, 9 MAY

The PCB's plans to conduct the remaining Pakistan Super League matches in the UAE may not succeed as the Emirates Cricket Board is "unlikely to approve" its request due to the border tensions between India and Pakistan.

A source close to the developments in the Emirates Cricket Board (ECB) has indicated that the Board is set to reject the request from the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), which has already announced that the PSL would be held in the UAE. The source has cited "security concerns potentially emanating from the rising tension between India and Pakistan." It is learnt that the recent developments have made the Emirates Cricket Board "wary of being perceived as an ally of PCB", which it believes the act of hosting the PSL may suggest.

"The Emirates Cricket Board has enjoyed a strong relationship with BCCI in recent years, having hosted the 'India' edition of the ICC T20 World Cup 2021. *—PTI*

SOUTHAMPTON TRIP

Haaland is fit, says Guardiola

LONDON, 9 MAY

Manchester City striker Erling Haaland is in contention to start against Southampton this weekend, manager Pep Guardiola said on Friday after the Norwegian striker recovered from an ankle injury that kept him sidelined for nearly six weeks.

With 21 goals in the Premier League, Haaland was a contender for the top scorer's Golden Boot award but has slipped to third behind Liverpool's Mohamed Salah (28) and Newcastle United's Alexander Isak (23).

City is third in the standings with three games left, three points behind second-placed Arsenal and a point above Newcastle. "(Haaland) is ready, he's fit. If he starts, we decide (on Saturday)," Guardiola told reporters."Still, Rodri is not available. Oscar (Bobb) and Nathan (Ake) started training with u, but still not available," he added.

Southampton sits bottom of the table with 11 points and just two wins all season. However, the already relegated south-coast club has nothing to lose, and Guardiola is not taking it lightly as he looks to consolidate a Champions League spot with Chelsea, Nottingham Forest, and Aston Villa all in the mix."We start 0-0, and it is a massively important game for us. *—PTI*

Italian Open: Alcaraz beats Lajovic

ROME, 9 MAY

Carlos Alcaraz returned from a brief injury layoff with a 6-3, 6-3 victory over Serbian qualifier Dusan Lajovic at the Italian Open on Friday.

The third-ranked Alcaraz withdrew from the Madrid Open last month due to an upper right leg ailment that bothered him during the Barcelona Open final. He also had a left leg injury.

Alcaraz won the opening four games but dropped his serve when he served for the first set at 5-2. The Spaniard broke back in the next game to close it out, showing off his speed on the clay court. *—PTI*

Psychiatrist accused in Maradona's death

BUENOS AIRES, 9 MAY

Psychiatrist Agustina Cosachov, one of the seven healthcare professionals on trial accused of negligence in the death of soccer great Diego Maradona testified on Thursday that she does not regret the treatment she provided to the former national team captain and blamed the private medical company for the deficiencies in his home care.

Maradona had surgery for a hematoma that formed between his skull and brain and stayed in intensive care at Los Olivos clinic between 4-11 Nov. He was then sent to recover at a private home, where he died on 25 Nov 2020, at the age of 60. "I acted convinced that what I was doing was best for the patient," said the psychiatrist. *—PTI*

Aditi struggles on Day One

DUBAI, 9 MAY

Indian golfer Aditi Ashok experienced a challenging debut at the Mizuho Americas Open, carding a five-over 77 to finish in T-113 position after the first day at Liberty National Golf Club.

Her performance was marred by two birdies, five bogeys, and a significant double bogey, forcing her to aim for a strong recovery in the second round to avoid missing the cut.

In comparison, world number two Jeeno Thitikul of Thailand leads with a bogey-free 64, while Celine Boutier and Hye-Jin Choi are tied in second position at 6-under 66.

Diksha, Pranavi make a decent start on a rainy day, on the 19th in Korea

Diksha Dagar and Pranavi Urs made a reasonable start with cards of 1-over 73 each on the first day of the rain-hit Aramco Korea Championship here.

Diksha was inside the top 10 till she came to the ninth hole, her closing hole of the day.

She bogeyed the hole and dropped to 1-over to go tied-19.

Pranavi had just one birdie against two bogeys in her 73, and she was also tied-19th.

Despite a beautiful week in Seoul, the rain proved a tough test for the stars of the Ladies European Tour (LET). *—PTI*

EUROPA LEAGUE

Man Utd sets up final with Tottenham

LONDON, 9 MAY

Manchester United produced a dramatic late comeback to beat Athletic Club 4-1 in the Europa League and complete an emphatic 7-1 aggregate semifinal victory, setting up a mouthwatering showpiece against Tottenham.

Fireworks crackled and red smoke filled an expectant Old Trafford on Thursday following an impressive 3-0 win against 10-man Athletic in northern Spain last week.

But the air of excitement was tinged by the knowledge that Ruben Amorim's United have shown a startling ability to implode during a horrendous Premier League season.

Manchester United's midfielder Mason Mount celebrates scoring Manchester United's fourth goal **PHOTO: X / @MANCHESTERUNITED**

Perhaps, little to anyone's surprise, Amorim's United, much like most of the club's teams that preceded him, had to do it the hard way. Trailing with 18 minutes to play, the substitutes were thrown on – including Mason Mount, who produced two brilliant goals to illuminate the Theatre of Dreams and turn the game on the night.

Amorim reverted to the team that started in the first leg, making eight changes following Sunday's 4-3 defeat against Brentford. Dani Vivian was suspended after his red card last week, and coach Ernesto Valverde was also hamstrung by the absence of brothers Nico and Inaki Williams, as well as top-scorer Oihan Sancet. Mikel Jauregizar silenced the home fans and gave the visitors hope on the night with a stunning strike in the 31st minute. *—PTI*